3/23/71

Dear Harodd,

This lettercooncerns my new JFK project for school. It is prompted by further reading in Sclesinger.

The nature of JFK's policies after the missile crisis is becoming apparent to me now, or so I think. Doubtlessly I am working under MX the bias of having spoken withyou.

You said over the phone that in my reading I would see that JFK gave Khrusch more than he asked for in the Missile Crisis. There is only one thing I've found so far that might fit this: the removal of the Jupiters in Turkey and Italy, which took place in early '63. Both Schles and Sorenson indicate that this was a virtually non-negotiable matter during the crisis, and that it was impossible to "trade" Cuba for Turkey, so to speak. Thus, both indicate, JFK ignored Khrush's first message (which mentioned Turkey) and responded to the second (which did not). However, I have found where JFK asked MacNamara to have the matter of the Jupiters looked into early in his administration, and then of course they were removed in '63.

As for one of the"realizations" JFK had, of which you have spoken, one--I think--has struck me, for it is in accord with my own strong feelings and not consistent with thinking early in the administration. Says Schles:

> "His feelings underwent a qualitative change after Cuba: a world in which nations threatened each other with nuclear weapons now seemed to him not just an irrational but an intolerable and impossible world. Cuba thus made vivid the sense that all humanity has a common interest in the prevention of nuclear war--an interest far above those national and ideological interests which had once seemed ultimate.

Is this the same man who was willing to go to nuclear war over Berlin, possibly even Cuba?

I get the impression from what I've read of Schel's account of '63 Russia policy that JFK was attempting to isolate China, which he and Macmillan considered the real threat to world peace. Apparently he felt that both the US and USSR had enough interest in maintaining the status quo that it was crucial for both to cooperate and isolate China. If this sounds simplistic or naive, understand that my readings thus far are limited and my own comprehension of the whole affair is not the best.

When I was there you MX mentioned something to me to which you swore me to secrecy. You said that JFK once said something about having money in a West German bank, before talks on the test ban began. You indicated that it could be found somewhere publically and that it was a mind-blower, although I did not really see its significance. I've found that now in Schles. Before sending Harriman off to Russia, JFK said in reference to something to "sweeten the package" re a US-USSR understanding on China: "I have some cash in the bank in West Germany and am prepared to draw on it if you think I should."

I don't want to put on any airs or make wild guesses. I'll be frank: I don't know what JFK meant by that. I got the notion further on that JFK was considering the neutralization of Germany, though I'm not at all sure of it. From the '61 Berlin crisis, it's hard to see him giving in at all on the question of W Germany. I don't think what he said meant that he was willing to invest his own funds in his efforts; he had no business to. You see, to begin with, I really don't know what significance there is in a President having money in a W German bank, or his offering to draw on it.

Perhaps, when you get the time, you could set me straight on some of this, esp. the thing with the W German bank. I know you can't detail in letters and look forward to talking with you when I can. But for now, as my research continues here, It would be good to know where I am on the right track in my thinking and where I am not.

Again, when you have the time, I'd really appreciate it.

Best,

Howard